

## **Establishing and Maintaining Career and Technical Education (CTE) Advisory Committees**

### CTE Advisory Committees

My name is Dr. Lakshmi Mahadevan and I am Program Coordinator for the Career and Technical Education Special Populations Training and Resource Education Center at Texas AgriLife Extension Service. Welcome to our webcast. We have created these webcasts to help you, the CTE teacher, learn more about critical topics that will help you effectively serve the special populations currently enrolled in your classroom.

Our first topic is on CTE Advisory Committees. In Career and Technical Education, Advisory Committees are groups of employers and community representatives who advise educators on the design, development operation, evaluation and revision of their CTE programs. The relevant workplace knowledge as well as resources provided by committee members help ensure that all aspects of occupational education reflect the needs and current conditions of the workplace. In addition, this constant communication helps to ensure that program graduates are capable of performing in the occupations for which they have been trained. In order for Advisory Committees to positively impact a school's CTE programs, educators and school officials must understand how to effectively collaborate with these committees.

Before an advisory committee is established, approval should be obtained from the appropriate school authority. Written statements of rationale and the purposes of the advisory committee should be prepared. Members of Advisory Committees may be selected from the following:

- Geographical sections of the school's service area
  - All types of business and industry, particularly those predominant in the local area
- Labor and management • Job service personnel
- Government
- Students and Former students
- Parents of students

Individuals who serve on the advisory committee should represent a cross-section of the community in terms of gender, race, occupation, and socio-economic status. Three important factors to be considered when nominating members to the committee are their capability, available time, and level of interest. A concentrated effort should be made to

select advisory committee members who have some direct relationship to the Career and Technical Education programs that the school is offering or plans to offer in the future.

An effective advisory committee provides information which will update, modify, expand, and improve the quality of programs. The committee supports and strengthens the partnership between business, the labor community, and education. The committee makes recommendations that will strengthen and expand the CTE curriculum and provide assistance in implementing those recommendations. It identifies and validates academic and occupational competencies, determines priorities, reviews and evaluates programs. It provides relevant information on current trends in business and industry. The advisory committee recommends facility and equipment modifications and updates. It helps to ensure that the learning environment is safe and adheres to industry safety guidelines. It gives support to programs and staff by encouraging and advising them, providing a liaison with legislators, and by articulating long-term goals and objectives of the CTE programs to students, parents, employers, and the community.

Here are some pointers now on how CTE instructors can establish and maintain a successful advisory committee.

1. First, determine what functions your advisory committee will primarily serve. Different Advisory Committees can be established for different purposes. For example, a General Advisory Committee is able to advise faculty and administration in the maintenance of the total CTE program. A program of study or a Career Cluster committee can aid with curriculum related matters, equipment, facilities, and post-secondary placement of graduates and/ or a Perkins advisory committee can be organized for the specific purpose of administering the Federal Perkins funds for CTE.
2. Second, select a representative group of members. The size of the committee should be large enough to reflect the diversity of the community but small enough to be manageable. Consider having the members appointed by appropriate school personnel and/or administration. Administrators should designate appointments for a finite time-period and they should establish procedures for dismissals or resignations.
3. Third, provide a detailed orientation to committee members both regarding their responsibilities as members as well as current information about your school's CTE program. Allow members to interview CTE teachers, tour the school's facilities, review curriculum materials and talk with students or parents. Consider creating a charter or a handbook for

members to refer to regarding committee functions, roles, terms, bylaws, election of officers and their relationship to your school.

4. Four; meetings should be planned and conducted at least twice a year for example in the Fall and the Spring, and must be based on a working agenda.

5. Minutes should be recorded at each meeting by an appointed secretary and subcommittees should be formed as necessary. Decisions can be based on a simple majority vote. Leadership is key to the success of the advisory committee so a Chair must be appointed on the basis of experience, skills, and leadership or personal qualities. The Chair will be responsible for presiding over meetings, working with the school and community members to carry out responsibilities, delegating tasks, submitting committee recommendations to appropriate personnel and following up on their implementation.

6. Six; establish bylaws. These bylaws should include the committee name, its purpose, terms of membership and membership information, member duties, procedures regarding the formation and responsibilities of subcommittees, and general decision-making procedures.

7. Seven; in collaboration with colleagues and school administration, conduct a periodic review of the advisory committee. Determine the extent to which: a) it is accomplishing the set goals, b) its recommendations and actions have benefitted the school, and c) if its future directions/activities need to be adjusted to be more beneficial.

8. Eight; establish procedures for recognizing the work of outstanding committee members. Hold banquets, award certificates of service, invite district leaders to attend, advertise the committees work through media such as the school's website and distribute appreciation letters to members on a periodic basis.

For more information about establishing and maintaining CTE Advisory Committees, visit our website or enroll in our online module called Building Successful Partnerships. You can receive professional development credit for any online module that you enroll in through our website.